



# Professional Learning Policy



## Hendre Schools

Professional Learning Lead ; Mrs N Dean , Deputy Head

## Introduction

[Our National Mission](#) is to achieve high standards and aspirations for all children and young people. The introduction of the Curriculum for Wales alongside significant reforms relating to children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN), and an emphasis on equity in the education system to ensure that all learners are given the opportunity to achieve their best, have changed the landscape of the education system in Wales. This in turn has changed the landscape of education at Hendre.

Through our Hendre Mission Statements we aim to contribute to the overall development, progression and success of each and every Hendre pupil. Central to this is our offer of high quality professional learning for all.

As outlined in the [National Professional Learning Entitlement](#), at Hendre we want all practitioners to be able to access high quality professional learning in order to further develop reflective, enquiring and collaborative education professionals and a culture of mutual responsibility in relation to professional learning.

At Hendre practitioners' use of the [professional standards](#) to reflect on individual practice. These professional standards are also used to inform performance management and school improvement arrangements. This in turn feeds into the development of the school's professional learning and school development plan and an individual professional learning journey for every practitioner ([Performance Management](#)). At Hendre all staff are encouraged to take responsibility for their own professional learning following school priorities and their own interests. The culture of our school is one where everyone supports and shares good practice and resources. To facilitate this, we have a Professional Learning Team Area on Google Drive where all staff can share and access professional learning resources.

At Hendre we use all forms of professional learning, whether that is time allocated to INSET or other school-led professional learning, or engaging with externally delivered professional learning to develop our staff within the context of [schools as learning organisations](#).

## Role of Leaders in Planning Professional Learning

At Hendre enabling ambitious professional learning for all practitioners is key in supporting high standards of both teaching and learning at all levels across the school. At Hendre professional learning is an entitlement of all staff ; [Professional Learning Offer](#).

As a dedicated Learning Organisation, we regularly engage with the Schools as Learning Organisations Toolkit to guide and reflect upon the realisation of our Growing Curriculum at the Infants and Cwricwlwm Hendre at the Juniors.

At the start of each school year the PL offer from the Local Consortia is shared with all staff ; <https://sites.google.com/hwbcymru.net/eassupportingourschools/eas-professional-learning-offer>

Professional learning activities are evaluated as part of the ongoing professional learning cycle and key knowledge and understanding is shared with all staff during INSET. This ensures that professional learning is impactful at all levels across the school. All staff are encouraged to reflect on courses and use their reflections alongside their Performance Management appraisals as part of selecting any future professional learning that they wish to attend.

Alongside this, ongoing Professional Research Projects <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15FucUIPrIR04jI8lHa5QD0IRYwI8Lbxf2usp=sharing> are set up, the focus for these fall in line with school development plan and MER cycle priorities, this ensures that there is a clear focus and objective for professional research across the school. As part of staff Professional Research Projects all staff are encouraged to carry out independent reading and research, trial new and innovative pedagogical approaches, embed new approaches and evaluate as part of their ongoing classroom practice, share their learning with colleagues within and outside of the school and evaluate the impact that their professional research has had on the standards of both teaching and learning. Each member of staff is supported on their journey by the school's Professional Learning Lead and their Performance Management Mentor. This support includes mentors/ leads sharing examples of their own practice, signposting relevant research or professional learning opportunities, offering time for supportive or evaluative conversations, providing feedback on progress etc.

At Hendre leaders use self-evaluation to help them plan professional learning that meets the improvement priorities of the school. They consider the difference professional learning has made to practice in the classroom and the effect that this has had on the progress of learners (where appropriate). The use of INSET and other professional learning feeds directly into and out of the school improvement planning process.

All leaders at Hendre create a positive culture and ethos to promote and support the continuous professional learning of all practitioners. Leaders consider how all forms of professional learning improve practice and ensure a collective understanding of education reforms.

At Hendre our leaders build a strong ethos for the school as a Learning Organisation and are committed to using time for professional learning effectively and to developing a shared understanding of how professional learning contributes to improved outcomes for learners. They identify effective practice within their organisation and facilitate effective approaches to sharing this with practitioners through INSET or other means.

At Hendre a key feature of the effective use of professional learning is providing practitioners with opportunities to work in collaboration to develop new approaches to learning, teaching and securing well-being. This is achieved through enquiry, innovation or through the evaluation of impact. Collaboration at Hendre comes within the setting, in partnership with another school or provider, across the cluster and across the wider education system.

Leaders consider how they evaluate the impact of all forms of professional learning to help them make informed decisions about ongoing provision and priorities for the school development plan.

## Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning

At Hendre professional learning has a focus on improving teaching and developing practice in line with the professional standards for teaching, leadership and assisting teaching.

The following principles underpin effective professional learning at Hendre;

- **Collaborative** - practitioners work together within and across schools as a key feature of professional learning, this includes coaching and mentoring.
- **Reflective** - professional learning provides opportunities for practitioners to reflect critically and candidly on current practice and being open to others' reflections on how practice can be improved or developed.
- **Informed** - professional learning is based on research and effective practice and it supports practitioners to build their own skills in making use of evidence, research and data.
- **Evaluated and Impactful** - the outputs and outcomes of professional learning are evaluated to consider the impact on learner progress and learning.
- **Responsive and Agile** - schools and providers are responsive to their evaluation of professional learning, reflecting on its value and contribution to school or provider strategic priorities and making changes so that it builds capacity to drive improvement.

## INSET

At Hendre all school practitioners attend and benefit from INSET.

At Hendre we recognise that teaching assistants make an essential contribution to supporting learners to access differentiated learning within the classroom. We encourage teaching assistants and teachers to engage in INSET together where appropriate so that they are able to develop a common understanding of how the school will address our national priorities.

We recognise that the terms of conditions of employment for teaching assistants are set by individual local authorities and differ from those of teachers and headteachers which are governed by the STPC(W)D. However, the Welsh Government is clear that in order to establish a positive culture that encourages and supports practitioners to engage in professional learning, all practitioners should part take in INSET, including teaching assistants.

Where a teaching assistant or part-time teachers are not able to attend INSET, the senior leadership team provides opportunities for them to engage in professional learning including sign posting to both synchronous and asynchronous resources, including those developed by the regional consortia, local authority or Welsh Government.

INSET days are allocated in line with the SDP and the professional development needs of staff.

Parents and carers are provided with dates well in advance of any INSET days so that they may prepare.

Where twilight sessions are used 3 x 2 hour sessions are used to make up one INSET day. Again parents and carers are provided with clear information on these sessions. This helps to avoid any misunderstanding, for example, parents or carers questioning why staff are not at school on a scheduled INSET day. In this instance, it is explained clearly that staff have already undertaken 3 twilight sessions instead.

At Hendre we recognise that delivering an INSET day as 3 twilight sessions may help staff to fully engage in professional learning.

At Hendre we take a collaborative approach to INSET days where possible. As a cluster we aim to minimise the impact of INSET days on parents and carers by communicating effectively so that some INSET can be taken on the same day. This maximises opportunities for collaboration and shared learning.

At Hendre all INSET days offer quality professional learning with aims of the day aligning with the principles of the National Approach to Professional Learning.

At Hendre a focus on professional learning in the context of our national priorities to implement Curriculum for Wales, ALN reforms, equity in education and Cymraeg is planned for effectively. This is critical in ensuring the success of Our National Mission to deliver a reformed and successful education system in Wales. It is intended that supporting practitioners to deliver our key priorities will lead to improved learner outcomes across the school.

All professional learning engaged in during INSET reflects the priorities as set out in the school's development plan and ongoing MER Cycle. Professional learning supports our school to develop the [8 contributory factors for successfully realising the Curriculum for Wales](#).

1. Enabling all learners, and in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to progress along their own learning pathway and raise their aspirations to achieve their full potential; allied to a range of assessment approaches to understand and support this progress.
2. Co-constructing a curriculum, in line with the Curriculum for Wales Framework, which promotes a broad range of knowledge, skills and experiences (including social and interactional experiences) with a clear understanding of why these matter.
3. Ensuring the school environment supports learners' and practitioners' well-being.
4. Supporting practitioners' understanding of what works in curriculum design by investing in the enquiry and pedagogic skills of all staff.
5. Enabling ambitious professional learning for all practitioners in a school dedicated to being a learning organisation.
6. Embedding reflection, self-evaluation and improvement within schools, with good school leadership as a pre-condition for that.
7. Being at the heart of their communities - building better relationships between schools and families, communities and employers, to support and promote educational achievement and excellent employment, next steps education and training.
8. Listening to children and young people as they engage with their learning and supporting them in achieving their aspirations.



INSET also allows teachers and teaching assistants to undertake mandatory training such as health and safety and safeguarding.

At Hendre all school staff are informed of the aim and purpose of planned INSET and how it supports the school development plan. It is always made clear what can be expected and there are always clear plans for what the INSET will achieve to enable staff to link the professional learning with their individual journeys.

## Professional Learning Funding

At Hendre the main purpose of any professional learning funding is to create time for all practitioners to develop their skills and practice to deliver high quality teaching and learning for all learners.

Examples of how PL Funding is use:

- releasing and covering staff to be involved in collaborative professional learning and planning - at a school level, and across clusters and networks.
- incentivising and rewarding staff to investigate the implications of Curriculum for Wales for their own teaching and assessment practice - at individual level, by funded release for professional enquiry or professional learning.
- creating roles and posts dedicated to the mission, and especially to supporting colleagues, departments and whole schools through professional enquiry, change management and schools as learning organisations activities.
- development of the role of Professional Learning Lead.